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Viewing cable 06MANAGUA2491, SIT REP 4 - NICARAGUAN ELECTIONS

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cable's unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#06MANAGUA2491**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
06MANAGUA2491	2006-11-09 22:40	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Managua

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758456.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758467.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758468.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758464.aspx>
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<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4102/estrada-y-la-ldquo-doble-cara-rdquo-ante-ee-uu>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3966/la-ldquo-injerencia-rdquo-de-ee-uu-en-el-2006>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-23/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2758764.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-23/Mundo/NotaPrincipal/Mundo2758753.aspx>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4041/millones-de-dolares-sin-control-y-a-disolucion>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4040/la-ldquo-injerencia-rdquo-de-venezuela-en-2006>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4047/rodrigo-barreto-enviado-de-ldquo-vacaciones-rdquo>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2757239.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/NotaPrincipal/Mundo2746658.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2757244.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2746673.aspx>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3991/dra-yadira-centeno-desmiente-cable-diplomatico-eeuu>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3968/pellas-pronostico-a-eeuu-victoria-de-ortega-en-2006>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3967/barreto-era-ldquo-fuente-confiable-rdquo-para-eeuu>

PP RUEHLMC
DE RUEHMU #2491/01 3132240
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 092240Z NOV 06
FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8180
INFO RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MANAGUA 002491

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/09/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [KDEM](#) [NU](#)

SUBJECT: SIT REP 4 - NICARAGUAN ELECTIONS

REF: MANAGUA 2473 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Ambassador Paul Trivelli for reasons 1.4 (b and d)

¶1. (C) Summary: With PLC candidate Jose Rizo finally conceding defeat to FSLN candidate Daniel Ortega, the attention of the political parties and observers has now turned to the National Assembly race. Rizo continues to insist that the PLC has enough uncounted rural votes to overcome ALN candidate Eduardo Montealegre for a second place finish in the Presidential vote (and an extra seat in the Assembly). The latest results from the ET quick count indicate that the PLC has closed in on the ALN, but still remains more than two points behind with 95 percent of the sample set reporting. End Summary.

PLC Closes Gap, but Remains in Third Place

¶2. (C) Local NDI Director Deborah Ullmer shared the results of Etica y Transparencia's updated quick count with embooffs. ET and NDI do not plan to release the results publicly due to the discrepancy with the PLC vote totals -- please protect. (Comment: We may negotiate a release if further irregularities arise. End Comment.) With 95 percent of the sample set reporting (total 1,200 JRVs), the results are as follows:

FSLN:	37.35%
ALN:	28.72%
PLC:	26.14%
MRS:	7.01%
AC:	0.38%

¶3. (C) For the most part, the results track closely with the CSE vote totals and the earlier sample set. The PLC, however, gained 1.99 points, beyond the projected 1.7% margin of error from the last sample set. NDI could not explain the discrepancy -- they claim that rural areas (generally considered PLC strongholds) were not/not undercounted in the previous sample set.

¶4. (U) Despite widely reported late JRV openings, Ullmer explained that the November 5 outcome was a significant improvement over the last national elections in 2001. According to Ullmer, 70 percent of JRVs began opening organizational procedures on time, versus 30 percent in 2001. Moreover, 17 percent of JRVs opened for voting by 7:00 a.m., versus only six percent in 2001. Formally trained CSE poll workers staffed 95 percent of JRVs (this is the first time that JRV-level officials received formal training).

¶5. (C) NDI and ET have shifted attention to the National Assembly race. NDI expects to have a preliminary report on

the deputy races and vote result challenges (impugnaciones) by Friday.

Balance of Power in the National Assembly

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¶6. (C) Zenalia Madrigal, the ALN official responsible for vote tabulation, told polcouns on November 8 that the ALN has tabulated 94 percent of JRV results (10,500 out of 11,274). According to ALN results, the margin between the ALN and PLC in the Presidential race is 4.12 percent. (Comment: In addition to the psychological benefit of coming out ahead in the presidential race, the second runner up also receives a seat as a deputy in the National Assembly. End Comment.) Madrigal believes that the ALN will win 24 to 27 seats in the Assembly (5 to 6 from the national list, and 19 to 21 departmental deputies) in addition to 5 to 6 Parlacen seats.

¶7. (U) On November 9, "El Nuevo Diario" published predicted National Assembly results, with 15 seats still undecided. The following is a summary of the paper's predictions:

- FSLN: 31 seats total. National deputies: Myriam Arguello, Tomas Borge, Rene Nunez, Alba Palacios, Brooklyn Rivera, Walmaro Gutierrez, Gustavo Porras. Departmental: Nery Sanchez (Madriz); Francisco Valenzuela, Martha Maria Gonzalez (Esteli); Nasser Silwany (Masaya); Jose Martinez (Carazo); Maria Lidia Mejia (Granada); Venancia Ibarra (Rivas); Ramon Villagra (Jinotega); Jose Thompson (RAAN); Marcelino Garcia, Hipolito Torres, Doris Garcia (Chinandega); Juan Gabriel Hernandez, Gladys Baez, Ramon Sarria (Leon); Pedro Haslam, Sadrach Zeledon (Matagalpa); Augustin Jarquin, Evertz Carcamo, Iris Montenegro, Jassier Martinez, Edwin Castro,

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Xochilt Ocampo, Jose Figeroa (Managua).

- ALN: 23 seats total. National deputies: Maria Eugenia Sequeira, Jamileth Bonilla, Salvador Talavera, Alejandro Bolanos Davis, Indalecio Rodriguez. Departmental: Eliseo Nunez (Masaya); Wilber Lopez (Carazo); Edgar Vallejos (Granada); Alejandro Ruiz, Norman Guevara (Rivas); Elman Urbina (Chontales); Carlos Lagrand (Leon); Roberto Callejas, Eduardo Gomez, Cesar Augusto Zamora (Chinandega); Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, Jorge Matamoros, Ramiro Silva, Carlos Garcia, Adolfo Martinez (Managua). (Note: Salvador Talavera left the ALN in September to sign a governability agreement with the FSLN, though he refused to resign his candidacy. He has since pledged to form his own caucus from former Resistance members -- see septel. In addition, outgoing President Bolanos and second runner up Presidential candidate Eduardo Montealegre will receive seats in the Assembly in the ALN caucus. End Note.)

- PLC: 19 seats total. National deputies: Jorge Castillo Quant, Francisco Aguirre Sacasa, Enrique Quinonez, Maria Dolores Aleman, Guillermo Osorno. Departmental: Rodolfo Alfaro (Madriz); Ramon Gonzalez, Marina Vargas (Chontales); Luis Ortega Urbina (Boaco); Alan Rivera (Jinotega); Carlos Olivas (Rio San Juan); Victor Manuel Duarte (RAAN); Francisco Jose Sacasa (RAAS); Maximino Rodriguez, Freddy Torres, Porfirio Castro (Matagalpa); Wilfredo Navarro, Leopoldo Navarro, Miguel Melendez (Managua).

- MRS: 4-5 seats total. National deputies: Victor Hugo Tinoco, Dora Maria Tellez. Departmental: Monica Baltodano, Mario Valle, Enrique Saenz (Managua).

¶8. (U) MRS Presidential candidate Edmundo Jarquin called on the opposition parties (ALN, PLC and MRS) to join forces and destroy the PLC-FSLN pacto, defend democracy, fight corruption, and seek development for the population. MRS president and Assembly candidate Dora Maria Tellez claimed to have evidence that the FSLN will attempt to steal two Assembly seats from the MRS through electoral irregularities.

¶9. (U) On November 9, Eduardo Montealegre published a letter to the Nicaraguan people pledging to work with the Ortega government for the benefit of the country. The letter tracks with the speech he delivered publicly on November 7. Montealegre called for his "Liberal brothers" in the PLC to join forces with the ALN and offered to forgive and asked forgiveness for the offenses committed by both sides during the campaign.

PLC Unrepentant

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¶10. (U) PLC leaders continued to insist through November 8 that they had enough votes to force the FSLN into a second round of voting. CSE president Roberto Rivas consequently criticized the PLC for failing to recognize Ortega as the victor and accused PLC leaders of "stirring up trouble." On the morning of November 9, PLC Presidential candidate Jose Rizo finally conceded that Ortega will be the first round winner. He continued to insist, however, that the PLC will gain enough support from the uncounted rural votes to beat out the ALN for second place. (Comment: CSE, ET, ALN and other sources indicate that this outcome is extremely unlikely, although the gap will narrow somewhat. End Comment.) On a morning talk show, PLC finance manager Gilberto Wong ignored Montealegre's call for reconciliation and blamed the U.S. Embassy and the Nicaraguan private sector for the PLC's defeat.

Comment

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¶11. (C) We are closely monitoring the CSE's final tabulation of the vote results for the presidential and the legislative races, specifically how they will influence which presidential candidate places second and the allocation of Assembly seats for the ALN and MRS. The PLC is in all certainty "pressuring" pact mate FSLN to make determinations in its favor to the detriment of the ALN, while the FSLN would prefer to limit the number of MRS seats in the Assembly. Observer missions and NGOs share our concerns. In the event these manipulations occur, we must be prepared to confront them.

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